

**WHEREAS**, Mattie Joseph Thaddeus Stepanek, who lived in the City of Rockville's King Farm community with his mother, Jeni, was affected by a rare and fatal form of muscular dystrophy, and

**WHEREAS**, Mattie Stepanek, an American poet and advocate, at the age of 3, began writing poetry, that he referred to as his "Heartsongs" which enabled him to cope with his disease, and

**WHEREAS**, The message contained in Mattie's "Heartsongs" touched the lives of people around the world, reaching individuals of all ages, races, nationalities, faiths, abilities, and aspirations, and

**WHEREAS**, each of Mattie's five books of poetry made the New York Times Best Seller list; and

**WHEREAS**, after his death on June 22, 2004, *Just Peace*, a collection of Mattie's correspondence with former President Jimmy Carter and essays on peace, was awarded the 2007 Independent Publisher Gold Medal Award for the Outstanding Book of the Year in the Peacemaker Category; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 3, 2005, the City of Rockville honored Mattie J. T. Stepanek for his remarkable contributions to his community and to people all over the world by naming a 26-acre park in the King Farm community the Mattie J. T. Stepanek Park, which was dedicated on October 18, 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, On Saturday, September 3, 2011 the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation and the Lollipop Kids Foundation are collaborating on the Peace Celebration "*Hope is real, peace is possible, life is worthy!*" The Peace Celebration encourages everyone to take time for peace, talk about peace, play together in peace, celebrate peace, and rebuild the mosaic of life; **NOW THEREFORE**

The Mayor and Council of the City of Rockville, do hereby proclaim the week of August 29 through September 3, 2011 as Mattie Stepanek Week in Rockville, and encourage the community to recognize the many contributions of Mattie J.T. Stepanek by "**Thinking Gently, Speaking Gently, and Living Gently**", the words by which this brave young man lived his meaningful life.



Phyllis Marcuccio, Mayor



John B. Britton, Councilmember



Piotr Gajewski, Councilmember



Bridget Newton, Councilmember



Mark Pierzchala, Councilmember

August 15, 2011